

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
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March 10, 1977


NSC Review Completed

MEMORANDUM FOR

The Vice President
The Secretary of State
The Secretary of Defense
The Director, Office of Management and Budget
The Director, Arms Control and Disarmament
Agency
The Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff
The Director of Central Intelligence
The US Representative to the United Nations

SUBJECT: Terms of Reference for PRM/NSC-10

Attached for your information are the approved terms of reference for PRM/NSC-10.


Michael Hornblow
Acting Staff Secretary

Attachment

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PRM/NSC-10

Comprehensive Net Assessment and Military
Force Posture Review

TERMS OF REFERENCE

I. PURPOSE AND STRUCTURE

A. The purpose of this undertaking is to provide a comprehensive examination of overall U.S. national strategy and capabilities, particularly in relation to potential adversaries. This examination will start from U.S. foreign policy as it exists at the present time. While recognizing that U.S. relations with potential adversaries involve elements of cooperation, this study will concentrate on overall U.S. national strategies for achieving U.S. objectives in the face of foreign competition, opposition, and hostility. The study will identify alternative military and non-military strategies as well as military force postures for implementing current national objectives. The analysis will also identify alternative national strategies and their implications for military strategy and force posture planning. *

B. The examination will be conducted in two parts, to be done concurrently and cooperatively. Data and analysis should be made available to and between both parts of the study.

II. MILITARY STRATEGY AND FORCE POSTURE REVIEW

A. Purpose. The purpose of this part of the analysis is to define a wide range of alternative military strategies, to construct force postures to support these strategies, to analyze the ability of these strategies to achieve U.S. objectives in certain key military contingencies, and to identify the key decisions required for the selection and implementation of the alternative military strategies and force postures.

* For purposes of this study, national objectives, national strategy, military strategy, and force posture will be defined as indicated at Appendix A.

B. Substance

1. An examination will be conducted of a broad range of alternatives to the current overall U.S. military strategy. This examination will consider the foreign policy, arms control, and force structure implications of a range of such strategies. The alternative strategies will highlight key strategy issues (such as criteria for deterrence, NATO warning time, etc.) and will include such general variations as a shift toward a "one war" strategy, a "short war" strategy in Europe, less reliance on forward-based ground forces, changes in the current objective of essential equivalence in strategic forces, and alternatives to the present "triad" posture.

2. The study should specify a limited number of key military contingencies involving U.S. strategic and/or general purpose forces and should assess for each the current relative capabilities of the U.S. and its allies to counter potential adversaries. The contingencies should include, but not be limited to:

- A major U.S. /Soviet strategic nuclear exchange;
- A limited U.S. /Soviet strategic nuclear exchange;
- A NATO/Pact war limited to Central Europe;
- A war in Central Europe plus a limited conflict on the flanks of Europe involving Soviet forces;
- A war in Europe plus a conflict with the USSR in other areas, including the Pacific, as part of an overall NATO/Pact war;
- A conflict in the Middle East involving limited Soviet participation;
- Intervention by the Soviet Union in relatively remote areas (such as Southern Africa); and
- Conflict with third countries without Soviet forces involved (such as in Korea).

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For each of these contingencies, the study should examine each side's capability to bring military power to bear. Included should be relative capabilities to mobilize, transport, sustain, and command and control forces in the combat area.

3. For each alternative military strategy, alternative force postures will be developed, with cost data provided for each one. These alternatives should again highlight key force structure issues (for example, alternative bomber forces, degree of reliance on land-based versus sea-based tactical air) and should include the current FYDP and postures fundamentally different from that plan; for example, postures involving a strategic dyad or quadrad and those making extensive use of land-based aircraft for sea control.

4. Alternative military strategies and force postures must be considered in the context of overall U.S. fiscal policy and the competing demands of non-defense programs and alternative government tax policies. The study will project future overall federal receipts and expenditures, and will explore potential tradeoffs between defense and non-defense programs.

5. The final report prepared for National Security Council review will not recommend any specific military strategy or military posture. It will provide options for each, and will indicate pros and cons for each based upon considerations such as military threat, foreign policy, arms control, political sufficiency, costs, technological risks, and specific capabilities in the contingencies outlined in paragraph 2 above. Detailed analyses of the areas studied will be included in annexes to the summary report.

C. Organization

A PRC Military Strategy and Force Posture Group will be created, chaired by DOD. A PRC Working Group for Military Strategy and Force Posture will also be created. It will be chaired by OSD/ISA and will have members from the NSC Staff, State Department, CIA, the Joint Staff, OMB, ACDA, and such other members as the Chairman or Assistant for National Security Affairs may request. Interagency task forces will be organized as directed by the Working Group, and will develop the alternative military strategies to be examined in the study. Among these task forces will be a task force to carry out military contingency assessments, as defined in paragraph 2 above (NSC chaired, to be coordinated with regional net assessment groups).

D. Schedule

1. The Working Group should submit to the PRC by April 1, 1977 an interim report:

- Outlining the military strategies being examined;
- Outlining the alternative force structures under consideration; and
- Providing a status report on the military contingency assessments (specified in Part II, paragraph B (2)).

2. Each task force should submit a preliminary version of its final report by May 1, 1977 and the final version on May 15, 1977. The Working Group will submit its final report to the PRC by May 25, 1977.

III. COMPREHENSIVE NET ASSESSMENT

A. Purpose. The purposes of the net assessment are:

- To review and to analyze past, present, and probable future trends in the evolution of the principal capabilities of the United States, its allies, and its principal potential opponents;
- To analyze the objectives and strategies of our principal opponents; and
- To develop and make recommendations concerning alternative national objectives and strategies for the United States.

B. Substance

1. General Questions. The overall net assessment will include topical and regional net assessments. Each of these will attempt to answer the following general questions with respect to its subject:

- What have been the most significant trends for this topic or region in the evolution of the relative capabilities of the U.S. (and its allies, as appropriate) and the Soviet Union (and the Warsaw Pact and other potential adversaries as appropriate) over the last 15 years?

- What is the present situation with respect to these capabilities for the topic or region?
- How do our principal opponents appraise U.S. capabilities and objectives with respect to this topic or region? How do they estimate their own strengths and weaknesses?
- What are the recent, current, and most probable future objectives and strategies of our principal opponents for this topic or region? What threats do these pose to U.S. national interests?
- What factors are most likely to affect the evolution of the capabilities on both sides during the next five years; the next 10 years?
- What are the alternative national strategies which the U.S. might reasonably follow with respect to the topic or region? What are their costs, risks, and benefits?
- What will be the probable impact of these alternative U.S. national strategies on the relative capabilities of the U.S. and its principal opponents over the next 10 years and on the ability of the U.S. to achieve its national objectives?

2. Regional Net Assessments. Net assessments will be undertaken to provide answers to the general questions listed above with respect to specified regions. Each regional net assessment will involve a comprehensive analysis of the goals, strategies, position, influence, and strengths and weaknesses of the United States and its principal allies and opponents in that region. It will include analysis of the political, diplomatic, economic, and military trends which will affect the relations between the United States and its principal allies and opponents in that region. For each region, the net assessment will deal with:

- National objectives and strategies;
- Military strategies and capabilities (including allied forces and the ability to project force into the region;
- Alliance cohesiveness and diplomatic support;

- Political influence and covert action capabilities; and
- Economic presence and influence.

As appropriate, the regional net assessment will draw upon the analyses prepared for the military force posture review of the ability of the United States and its principal allies and opponents to apply military force in the contingencies specified in Part II, paragraph B-2 of this memo. Regional net assessments (to be chaired by either State or NSC) will include the following regions:

- a. Europe
- b. Middle East
- c. Africa
- d. South Asia
- e. East Asia
- f. Western Hemisphere

3. Topical Net Assessments. Net assessment will be undertaken to provide answers to the general questions specified above in Part B-1 for each of the topics listed below. These net assessments may encompass, as appropriate, comparisons of the United States and the Soviet Union, NATO, and Warsaw Pact countries, or other selected groups of countries. The topical net assessment may also draw on regional net assessments in putting together the global assessment. The topical net assessments will include, but not necessarily be limited to, the following topics:

- a. Strategic nuclear policy and forces (DOD chaired, to draw on material developed in the military force posture study);
- b. Technology including both military-relevant technology and general technological capability (NSC chaired);
- c. Economic strategy and capabilities (NSC chaired);
- d. Intelligence capabilities (DCI chaired); and
- e. Political institutions, leaderships, and national psychology (NSC chaired).

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C. Organization. An SCC Net Assessment Group will be created, chaired by the NSC. An SCC Working Group for Net Assessment will be also created. Its chairman will be appointed by the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, and it will have members from the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the State Department, CIA, the Joint Staff, OMB, ACDA, and other agencies as the Assistant to the President may designate. Task forces with members from the appropriate interested agencies will be organized to undertake the topical and regional net assessments.

D. Schedule. The Working Group should submit to the SCC by April 1, 1977 an interim report summarizing its work to that date and outlining the principal conclusions it expects to reach. Each task force should submit a preliminary version of its final report by May 1, 1977 and the final version on May 15, 1977. The Working Group will submit its final report to the SCC by May 25, 1977.

IV. THE FINAL REPORT

A summary of the entire report, not to exceed 70 pages, should be submitted for NSC consideration not later than June 1, 1977; the final version should be completed by June 15, 1977.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be "H. L. ...", is written over the text of the document.

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APPENDIX A

NATIONAL OBJECTIVES - Those fundamental aims, goals, or purposes of a nation -- as opposed to the means for seeking these ends -- toward which a policy is directed and efforts and resources of the nation are applied.

Example: The continued freedom and security of our Western European allies.

NATIONAL STRATEGY - The development and use of the political, economic, military, and psychological powers of a nation during peace and war, to secure national objectives.

Example: Pursue a strong NATO alliance. Support economic growth and strength of individual members, through various economic agreements (investments, tariffs, credits, etc.) and through combined defense programs and U.S. military force commitments.

MILITARY STRATEGY - A statement of the ways in which we intend to handle the various combinations of military contingencies that could arise in the pursuit of our national strategy.

Example: Maintain conventional forces capability to halt a major Soviet/Warsaw Pact attack in Central Europe without major loss of territory. Maintain nuclear forces sufficient to deter Soviet use of nuclear weapons and, failing deterrence, guarantee an amount of economic and military damage to the Soviet Union at least equivalent to that inflicted on the U.S. and its allies.

FORCE POSTURE - The composition, basing, and readiness for combat of our military forces.

Example: Seventeen Army divisions, of which five are deployed in Western Europe, plus 26 tactical air wings, of which six are deployed in NATO, plus designated naval task force.

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PRIVILEGE NOT ASSIGNED TO

"Intelligence"

By Huntington + Best

18 March 77

INTELLIGENCE

Objectives and strategies

What are the principal objectives of US intelligence vis à vis the Soviet Union? What is relative priority of different intelligence goals?

How do the Soviets perceive US intelligence objectives?

How do the Soviets perceive substantive US objectives in regard to détente, arms control, and China?

How do the Soviets perceive US intelligence capabilities?

Adversary objectives and strategies

What are the recent, current, and probable future objectives and strategies of the Soviet Union in regard to intelligence collection? What threats do they pose? Where is the US most vulnerable?

What evidence is there of any changes in Soviet intelligence collection practices in the period since the initiation of détente? What is the significance of any such changes?

How is the US equipped to get information on which to base judgments about Soviet intentions and motives? How have our resources for acquiring reliable information of this sort varied over time, and are they likely to improve or decline?

Significant trends

What have been the most important trends in American and Soviet intelligence processes in the past fifteen years?

What has been the trend in overall relative capabilities?

Status of relative capabilities

What are the most important gaps in American intelligence on the USSR? in Soviet intelligence on the USA?

How has the asymmetry in US and Soviet access to information on the other affected American and Soviet intelligence? How would changes in US intelligence procedures affect these problems?

What degree of coverage do we have of Soviet R&D programs?

How satisfactory are current procedures for risk assessment in determining intelligence targets and collection programs, especially in regard to [REDACTED]

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Is the current ratio of resources devoted to analysis as opposed to collection satisfactory? Would a marginal increment of resources devoted to analysis be more useful than a comparable increment in collection?

NSC

IC post-mortems of intelligence failures in the early 1970s suggested institutionalizing a system of devil's advocacy within the community, to forestall failures due to agreed but unproven assumptions. What were the results of such recommendations? Is there any evidence by which to gauge the likelihood that US intelligence processes are more/less vulnerable to crucial surprises than previously?

Future evolution

What will be the most crucial intelligence issues in the next five to ten years?

What factors will determine the evolution of US and Soviet intelligence capabilities and relative capacity to perform their missions?

What are the prospects for degradation or improvement of technical collection capabilities (COMINT, ELINT, satellite surveillance)? What US innovations and Soviet countermeasures could significantly change the range of intelligence available for technical sensors? What are the Soviets capable of doing (or what will they be capable of) that they are not doing now to frustrate US surveillance (1) within the bounds of the SALT I treaty provisions against interference with national technical means of verification; (2) in the event those treaty provisions lapse or are abrogated?

Alternative strategies

What alternative strategies for intelligence collection or production might the US pursue, and what are their costs, risks, and benefits?

What changes, if any, might be productive in procedures for determining geographic and functional priorities for intelligence targeting?

What forms of peripheral reconnaissance should be continued, renewed, discontinued, or emphasized? Should any special allowances be made for China?

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What would be the probable impact of alternative strategies on relative intelligence capabilities of the US and USSR?

Which of the most critical strategic and political issues do we have reason to believe the US may lack sufficient intelligence capability to cover?

What would be the net consequences of more/less reliance on human sources? In which regions and on what topics would a decline in HUMINT be most damaging?

Which sorts of domestic constraints would impose the heaviest burden on foreign intelligence? What is the consequence for intelligence of the erosion of government secrecy? In what respects could greater openness (e.g. reduction of compartmentation) enhance intelligence rather than damage it?

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NOTES:

